

ISSUE SUMMARY:

Region 3 is currently renewing leases for four of their five locations: Region 3 Headquarters in Philadelphia, PA; Chesapeake Bay Program Office in Annapolis, MD; Contingency of Operations Plan (COOP) in Boothwyn, PA; and, the Wheeling, WV field office.

BACKGROUND:

The current leases for three of Region 3's facilities expire in 2021. Region 3 is working with the General Services Administration (GSA) on new leases and relocating the Chesapeake Bay Office in Annapolis, MD; COOP site in Boothwyn, PA; and, Region 3 HQs in Philadelphia, PA. This requires a vast amount of coordination with many stakeholders. The Region 3 Headquarters facility alone is a \$21 million project, paying over \$5 million in annual rent. Each project involves very detailed coordination and analysis with EPA HQs, GSA, Lessors, Architects, Contractors, and other stakeholders. GSA provides real estate services for Federal Agencies and is responsible for selecting the building, negotiating the lease with the lessor to meet EPA requirements including coordination with lessor for tenant improvements. EPA HQs is the primary GSA contact for procurement, design and construction of the new locations. Region 3 coordinates with EPA HQs and GSA to develop requirements, design space, procure furniture and coordinate occupancy of new space as well as decommissioning existing space. To achieve success, a significant amount of time and resources must be committed to these projects. These projects are extremely labor intensive for the Regions and require senior level involvement at every stage. The current status of each lease and project schedule is as follows:

Location	Existing Lease Expiration Date	Move Date	Employee Count/Square Footage of New Facilities	Status
R3 Headquarters relocation to Four Penn Center, Philadelphia, PA	Winter 2021	Fall 2021	800 employees/ 150,000 sf	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design Phase of all three facilities almost complete• Notice To Proceed (NTP) for construction is expected for all facilities within the next few months• HD Filing and furniture is being designed and selected• Working on move contracts and decommissioning plans for each facility
Chesapeake Bay Program Office relocation to 1750 Forest Drive, Annapolis, MD	Summer 2021	Spring 2021	100 employees/ 12,500 sf	
COOP Facility Relocation to Linwood, PA	Summer 2021	Summer 2021	1 contractor/3,500 sf	
Wheeling Office in Wheeling, WV – In August 2020, Region 3 received a draft report of an analysis of the building conditions of Wheeling Field Office at 1060 Chapline Street, Wheeling, West Virginia from GSA. The report identified a number of critical health and safety issues. Given the seriousness of the issues, Region 3 has closed the Wheeling Field Office until further notice. Staff assigned to the Wheeling Field Office are required to telework while we continue to review the report and look at options to mitigate the issues identified. In October 2020, EPA will be performing market research with GSA on future relocation.				

KEY EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:

☒ Congress
 ☒ Industry
 ☒ States
 ☒ Tribes
 ☒ Media
 ☒ Other Federal Agency
☒ NGO
 ☒ Local Governments
 ☐ Other: Describe

MOVING FORWARD:

As we continue to work to relocate these facilities, Region 3 is also faced with the challenge of workforce reconstitution relative to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our goal is to effectively resume normal operations by using a time-phased approach to prepare our facilities to be reoccupied. The challenge is to accomplish this, while at the same time decommissioning the existing facilities in preparation for the relocations. Currently, Region 3 is in Phase 2 of Reconstitution, assigning one day per week for employees to come into the facilities, but encouraging employees to telework. This presents a challenge of finding innovative ways to declutter and empty the existing buildings by the lease expiration dates in 2021 and creates the possibility of paying double rent should the current facilities not be vacated by lease expiration dates.

It is also important to note that EPA is significantly reducing its footprint for all relocations. For example, R3 Headquarters relocation is reducing in size by 100,000 square feet. This will require a major change in our business processes, including consolidation of file rooms and changing how we manage records. We currently manage over 21 file rooms in our existing HQs location, which will be reduced to a single, 2800 square foot Records Center at the new facility. The Agency is moving from storing paper records to digitization and building two digitization centers to consolidate this process. Due to COVID, the buildout of these centers is significantly delayed, and Region 3 is faced with the challenge and expense of finding temporary storage for its paper records while the new digitization centers are completed. In addition, the National Archives and Records Administration is operating at a very limited capacity, which prevents Region 3 from shipping existing records to the center. Region 3 is working with EPA HQs to find solutions to the existing challenges to successfully complete all moves in a timely manner.

LEAD OFFICE/REGION: R3/MSD

OTHER KEY OFFICES/REGIONS: R3